

A Bowl of Lemons

By

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Cast of Characters

<u>Aiden Snow</u> :	Protagonist; 17 and full of angst. Dressed in red and black.
<u>Elie Snow</u> :	Antagonist; Aiden's 8-year-old sister. Sunny disposition and cheerful clothing.
<u>Mom (Mrs. Snow)</u> :	A nervous, mouse-like woman.
<u>Dad (Mr. Snow)</u> :	A rather quiet, subdued man who speaks very casually.
<u>Doomsayer</u> :	A maniac come to warn AIDEN and ELIE about the end of the world
<u>Bob</u> :	The next-door neighbor. Friendly and perceptive.

ACT I

Scene 1: Evidence

STAGE:

The left two-thirds of the stage is a small white KITCHEN with a tall counter and bar stools. There is a large bowl full of lemons on the kitchen counter. The rightmost part of the stage will be used for the lemonade stand and the train car.

AIDEN sits at the counter stage right, examining a photograph in his hand. He takes a single bite of the cookie in his other hand, and it makes a comically loud crunching sound. AIDEN looks at it in disgust, throws it in the garbage, and wipes his hand on his pants. Offstage, a door opens and closes. Enter MOM, DAD, and ELIE.

AIDEN

How was church?

DAD

How was it? It was the house of God. Why weren't you there?

AIDEN

Didn't feel like it.

ELIE

How come? You never come anymore.

AIDEN

Boring.

MOM

Boring? God was there.

AIDEN

God's boring.

MOM

(to DAD, tragically)
Listen to our son.

*DAD shrugs. AIDEN looks back at the photograph.
ELIE looks over his shoulder.*

ELIE

What's that?

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN

Evidence.

ELIE

What kind of evidence?

AIDEN

See that dark spot?

ELIE

Where?

AIDEN

(pointing)

There.

ELIE

Looks like a smudge.

AIDEN

It's not a smudge. It's a sasquatch.

ELIE

What's a sass-kwach?

AIDEN

You know, bigfoot. Maybe the missing link between monkeys and humans. There's been a sighting.

ELIE

Where'd you get the picture from?

AIDEN

Internet.

ELIE

Which Internet?

AIDEN

There's only one, dummy. Anyway, I'm gonna find it.

ELIE

The Internet?

AIDEN

The Sasquatch.

ELIE

Oh. Where is it?

AIDEN

If I knew that, I wouldn't have to look for it.

(CONTINUED)

ELIE

Well, where you gonna look?

AIDEN

Pickneyville.

ELIE

But isn't that far away?

AIDEN

That's the idea.

ELIE

Can I come?

AIDEN

No. In the first place I'm going alone. And in the second place I don't got the money for one train ticket, let alone two.

ELIE

But I want to help.

AIDEN

Get lost.

ELIE

Okay.

ELIE starts to walk away, then stops and stares at the lemons.

ELIE

(suddenly remembering)

Oh yeah! Aiden, can you help *me* with something?

AIDEN

No.

(reluctantly)

What?

ELIE

(timidly)

I'm... There's this thing, and I'm just having some problems with spelling some stuff.

AIDEN

No. Better things to do.

A door opens and closes offstage.

(CONTINUED)

ELIE

But mom said you have to help me because you're my brother.

AIDEN

If that bitch wants me to do something then she should tell me herself.

ELIE

Don't say stuff about mom like that. Why are you so mean?

AIDEN

Why are you so retarded?

ELIE

I have a condition.

AIDEN

A condition of being a retard?

ELIE

I'm not that retarded. My words just get jumbled. It's called dyslexia.

AIDEN

I know what it's called.

ELIE

My teacher says Albert Einstein had the same thing.

AIDEN

Einstein had probably the biggest brain on the planet. What do you got?

ELIE

You.

(beat. This catches AIDEN off guard)

You can spell things without getting jumbled.

AIDEN

Fine. What do you need this for again?

ELIE

I'm an entrepreneur.

AIDEN

You want to know how to spell entrepreneur?

ELIE

No. I need to know how to spell "delicious."

Enter BOB, stage left.

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN

D-E-L-I-C-I-O-U-S.

ELIE listens, writes it down on a piece of paper, and shows it to AIDEN.

ELIE

Is this right?

AIDEN

No. I got no time to teach a retard. You can't even spell things when I tell you the letters.

ELIE slinks away with paper in hand. Exit stage right.

BOB

That was a little harsh, kid.

AIDEN

Maybe. And who the hell are you?

BOB

(extends hand, but AIDEN does not shake)

The name's Bob. Just moved in next door.

AIDEN

Well, *Bob*, what are you doing in my house?

BOB

I was just returning a wrench.

AIDEN

Oh.

BOB

(beat)

So, why are there so many lemons?

AIDEN

Are you referring to this obnoxious bowl, or are you looking for a theodocy?

BOB

What?

AIDEN

When my parents first bought this house, they planted some seeds from a tangerine, but instead it grew a lemon tree. They're sour as hell, too.

BOB

But tangerine seeds can't grow lemons.

AIDEN

Tell that to the lemon tree. I guess that tangerine was some kind of freak of nature. It's sort of like a miracle, only it sucks.

BOB

Interesting.

AIDEN

Somewhat.

Enter DAD. BOB hands him a wrench.

BOB

(to DAD)

Thanks.

DAD

No problem.

BOB

(to AIDEN)

Nice meeting you.

AIDEN

Whatever.

BOB exits.

Scene 2: Lemonade

ELIE is sitting behind a lemonade stand with a sloppy drawing and a misspelled sign reading "Delishus Saskwach Lemonade" On the stand is a bowl of lemons, a pitcher, and cups.

Enter AIDEN.

AIDEN

What's this?

ELIE

I told you. I'm an entrepreneur.

AIDEN

Sasquatch lemonade?

ELIE

You were talking about it and it sounded cool. Don't you think my sign is cute?

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN

Bigfoot isn't cute. It's big and scary and shrouded in mystery. Besides, you can't name a lemonade stand that. People are going to think it's supposed to taste like sasquatch.

ELIE

It tastes delicious.

AIDEN

That's not the point.

Enter BOB.

BOB

Sasquatch lemonade, huh?

ELIE

Yup.

BOB

Cute sign. How much?

ELIE

75 cents.

BOB pays and drinks the cup.

BOB

Pretty good.

AIDEN

Well, looks like you got your first customer, despite your stupid sign.

Elie pulls out a large wad of cash.

ELIE

Not exactly. More like my million-billionth customer.

AIDEN

Unbelievable.

ELIE

Never underestimate thirsty people.

AIDEN

Why are you doing this, anyway? What are you going to buy?

ELIE

A girl's gotta eat.

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN

You're a ten year old living with your parents.

ELIE

(Shrugging)

I don't know. It's what people say.

AIDEN

I see your sign is still wrong.

ELIE

Cause you wouldn't help. But I decided it's better this way.

AIDEN

Oh?

ELIE

Makes me look more cute and innocent.

AIDEN

Is that why your sasquatch drawing has utters, then?

ELIE

Shut up!

(beat)

I got a fish today. Did you see my fish?

AIDEN

I hate fish.

ELIE

I named him Martie.

AIDEN

How do you even know it's a him?

ELIE

I don't know.

AIDEN

You're stupid.

ELIE

How can you tell?

AIDEN

Because everything you say is stupid.

ELIE

No, I mean how do you tell if a fish is a boy or a girl?

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN

Oh. I don't know.

ELIE

(pleasantly amused)
I guess you're stupid, too.

AIDEN

Whatever.

Enter DOOMSAYER.

DOOMSAYER

(shouting)
You two! Do you want to live?

ELIE

Do you want to buy some lemonade?

AIDEN

Is this going to be about Jesus?

DOOMSAYER

No.

AIDEN

Well then, let's hear it.

ELIE

(drawing close to AIDEN, grabbing his
hand)
Let's go, Aiden.

AIDEN

Let's go? This is our house.

ELIE

But this person is creepy.

AIDEN

Shut up, El.

DOOMSAYER

We're all going to die.

AIDEN

No kidding, dipshit. Anything else?

DOOMSAYER

In 2012, the Mayan Calendar ends.

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN

(sarcastic)
Fascinating.

DOOMSAYER

The Mayans are the most astronomically advanced of the ancient cultures. From studying the stars, they realized that this age will come to an end in the year 2012.

AIDEN

Mhm.

DOOMSAYER

That's three years from now.

AIDEN

I know.

DOOMSAYER

Every major religion has a prophecy about the end of the world. The signs are coming to pass. Make no mistake. The end IS near.

AIDEN

If the world's going to end, what are you doing out here anyway?

DOOMSAYER

Warning unbelievers.

ELIE

(tugging at his arm)
Come on, Aiden. Let's go. I don't like him.

AIDEN

Shouldn't you be in a bustling city square or something?

DOOMSAYER

They kicked me out.

AIDEN

And I'll kick your ass. Are you gonna buy some goddamn lemonade or what?

DOOMSAYER

This is hardly the time for carnal pleasures.

AIDEN

(suddenly angry)
Well why the hell not? It's as good a time as any. If the world's gonna end, it's gonna end and there isn't a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN (cont'd)

damn thing either of us can do about it. As far as I'm concerned you're going to die just the same. So go home. All you can do is what we all do: piss the days away and try not to get too bored while you're waiting to die.

DOOMSAYER

But this age is at an end, man. 2012.

AIDEN

Get lost.

As DOOMSAYER continues, AIDEN pelts him with lemons from the basket. DOOMSAYER flinches at each one, but keeps talking.

DOOMSAYER

The Mayan calendar ends, I said. That's why Galileo was exiled. He discovered the truth.

ELIE

(to Aiden)

Stop it! I need those!

DOOMSAYER

And what do you think is buried in Roswell? I'll tell you what--ow!

AIDEN finally throws the pitcher at DOOMSAYER, and DOOMSAYER runs offstage. There is a long, awkward silence between AIDEN and ELIE.

ELIE

(mournfully)

My lemons...

AIDEN

(suddenly depressed)

Yeah...

ELIE

(starts wiping spilled lemonade with a rag)

Aiden, do you really believe all that stuff?

AIDEN

Mayan calendar and all that shit? No. Who cares anyway.

ELIE

No, I mean, what you said. About boredom and waiting to die.

(CONTINUED)

AIDEN

Oh. I don't know.

A long pause. AIDEN and ELIE stand close, but avoid eye contact.

AIDEN

Remember when you tried to sell lemonade last year, and forgot the sugar?

ELIE

And everybody pretended to like it anyway. Even you.

AIDEN chuckles.

ELIE

That was two years ago, Aiden.

AIDEN

Oh.

ELIE

Are you still leaving this weekend?

AIDEN

Of course. Like I'd want to stay at the house.

ELIE

What's wrong with that?

AIDEN

Boring. Nothing here.

ELIE

I'm here.

AIDEN

Exactly. Besides, I gotta find the sasquatch.

ELIE

Wait. Why is the sasquatch so important to you anyway?

AIDEN

I don't know. I guess it's just more interesting.

ELIE

More interesting than me?

AIDEN

I... don't know. Don't put it like that.

(CONTINUED)

ELIE

Then put it some other way.

AIDEN

Everybody is just so damn needy. And predictable, too. It's like I know everything everybody's going to say, and I don't want to hear any of it.

ELIE

You don't like me bothering you, right? I Bother you.

AIDEN

I didn't mean it like that.

ELIE

I know.

AIDEN

(beat.)

Sometimes I just want to be alone, you know? And by sometimes I mean all the time. Sometimes I think if I spend one more second in that house my head will explode into a million pieces.

ELIE

Sounds painful.

AIDEN

Mhm.

ELIE

If you *always* wanna be alone, why did you come out here with me?

AIDEN

I don't know. I didn't. I mean, I was coming outside anyway. I'm leaving.

AIDEN walks off stage reluctantly. ELIE begins picking up the lemons. CURTAIN

Scene 3: Argument

In KITCHEN, AIDEN pours himself a beverage and puts a pitcher in the refrigerator. Enter DAD.

DAD

Hey. How ya doin?

AIDEN shrugs without looking at him.

AIDEN

I don't know. Why?

MOM

(offstage)

I made cookies. Did you guys see?

DAD

Yes, dear.

(to AIDEN)

We should go to Carhenge this weekend. You and me.

*Enter ELIE with a large posterboard and markers.
In the background, she sits on the floor and
starts drawing something on it.*

AIDEN

Carhenge? What the hell is that?

DAD

It's like Stonehenge, only it's made entirely of cars.
Isn't that neat?

AIDEN

No.

DAD

It's in Nebraska.

AIDEN

Sounds stupid.

DAD

I'm dying, son.

AIDEN

No shit. What does that have to do with some ridiculous
monument in the middle of nowhere?

MOM

(Offstage)

Don't use that word.

DAD

Dying?

MOM

The S word.

AIDEN

Shit?

(CONTINUED)

MOM

Stop it.

AIDEN

Fine.

(to DAD)

It's your own damn fault, you know.

DAD

What?

AIDEN

That you're dying. If you really are, that is. Are you?

DAD

I don't know.

AIDEN

Well quit saying shit like that, then.

Enter MOM with a plate of cookies.

MOM

How come nobody ate my cookies? There's not anything wrong with them, is there?

DAD

They were good.

ELIE

Yeah mom, I'm just not very hungry.

MOM

Aiden?

AIDEN

What?

MOM

Did you like the cookies?

AIDEN

They were alright.

MOM

They were hard, weren't they? You all didn't like them.

AIDEN

You are pathetic, you know that, mother? Your self-esteem is all wrapped up in your cookies. It's absurd.

(CONTINUED)

MOM

I just wanted to make something nice.

Aiden purposefully knocks over tray of cookies.

AIDEN

Bullshit!

ELIE

Aiden!

MOM

Don't use that word.

DAD

Don't disrespect your mother.

AIDEN

Shut up. Both of you. Just shut up and listen.

(to MOM)

Don't make cookies like you're trying to be nice, when all you want is to be praised. Stop trying to win everyone's affections with your goddamn cookies that taste like shit anyway. Try having a personality.

(to DAD)

And you: don't try and talk me into going on some spiritual quest to a dumb-ass monument with you just because there was a blip on some test said there *might* be something wrong and now you feel the need to have half a dozen midlife crises and make a goddamn martyr out of himself and tell the world you're dying.

ELIE

Aiden, stop it!

(near tears)

I hate it when you fight with them.

AIDEN

(yelling)

You stop it! Stop whining. I don't want to hear it. All you do is whine and hoard your thousands of dollars from your stupid lemonade stand so you can buy "my pretty pony" or whatever stupid crap stupid little girls buy.

ELIE

(crying now)

A wasn't gonna buy a pony...

AIDEN

Well, whatever.

(CONTINUED)

ELIE

No, I was gonna give it to you.

AIDEN

What?

ELIE

(composing herself)

So you can go to Pickeryville and see the sasquatch.

AIDEN

(his anger vanishes, turned to
confusion)

Wait, what? Why?

ELIE

You're my brother. And if you don't wanna be with us anymore... If we keep on bothering you by talking to you and asking for stuff... I don't know, I just want you to have fun.

Beat. ELIE takes the wad of cash out of her pocket and holds it out to AIDEN. Both parents stand impotently in the background.

DAD

(holding his hand out)

You sure you want to do that, Elie?

ELIE continues to hold the money out, staring at AIDEN. After a long pause, he takes it and starts counting it.

ELIE

Is that enough?

AIDEN

Yeah. It's enough.

AIDEN puts on a hoodie and starts to walk away.

MOM

Where are you going?

AIDEN

Out.

(to ELIE)

And, Elie? Thanks for the money.

AIDEN exits.

Scene 4: Train

A small train car is set up in place of the lemonade stand. The car is a padded bench against the wall with a dark window behind it. Dim lighting. Sounds of an engine running.

AIDEN is sitting on the bench alone for a minute. Enter BOB.

BOB

There room in this car?

AIDEN

What are you doing here?

BOB

Going to visit my sister.
(as he sits down on the opposite edge
of the bench from AIDEN)
The other car's getting crowded.

AIDEN

Oh.

BOB

You?

AIDEN

(distracted)
Huh?

BOB

Where are you going?

AIDEN

Pickneyville. To see a sasquatch. It's out in the woods around there.

BOB

That's exciting.

AIDEN

Yeah, I guess. I don't know.

BOB

What?

AIDEN

I don't *know*. It just... seems kinda stupid all the sudden.

(CONTINUED)

CONDUCTOR

We have arrived at Pickneyville. Please watch your step as you exit the train.

BOB

That's your stop, isn't it?

AIDEN

Yeah.

(silently scratches the back of his head)

I bet it's not real.

BOB

Hm?

AIDEN

The Sasquatch. Probably a hoax.

BOB

Probably. I guess there's no point in getting off here, then.

AIDEN

Nope.

BOB

I bet your sister will be glad to have you around this weekend.

AIDEN

What would you know about it?

BOB

Nothing, really.

AIDEN turns his head away and slouches. LIGHTS OFF.

Scene 5: Home

Aiden walks into KITCHEN, picks up a lemon, and sits next to DAD who is making a sandwich.

ELIE

You're back!

ELIE runs up and hugs AIDEN. AIDEN's arms are limp, but he can't help smiling a little.

AIDEN

Mhm.

(CONTINUED)

DAD
Not leaving this weekend, huh?

AIDEN
Nope.

DAD
Want to go to church?

AIDEN
Not really.

DAD
Want to go to Carhenge?

AIDEN
I guess.

Aiden takes a bite out of lemon.